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EXAMINER	
KENNEDY, ADRIAN L	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/673,213	BIRKHOELZER, THOMAS	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Adrian L. Kennedy	2121	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *02 May 2007*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-24* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-24* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on *30 September 2003* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

Examiner's Detailed Office Action

1. This Office Action is responsive to **Amendment After Non Final Rejection**, filed **May 2, 2007**

2. **Claims 1-24** were originally presented.

3. **Claims 1, 4, 10, 22 and 24** were amended.

4. **Claims 1-24** will be examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Barrett et al. (USPN 6,029,144).

Regarding claim 1:

Barrett et al. teaches,

> (Currently Amended) A workflow management system (C 8, L 26-29; "*auditor system 256 preferably includes an audit workflow system*") with continuous status management (C 2, L 54-56; "*automated auditing*"), comprising:

a first apparatus (C 8, L 22-26; "*auditor system 216*") adapted to detect (C 6, L 9-12; "*policy checker 208 comprises a means for testing the selected expense entries in audit queue 308 for compliance with established policies and rules*"; The examiner takes the position that in order to test expense entries, the policy checker has to detect if there is an appropriate rule or policy that dictates whether reimbursement should be paid for the expense being audited) fuzzy process definitions (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the purpose of the rules, in the invention of Barrett et al., is to define the reimbursement process in the automated auditing system);

a second apparatus adapted to control (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the auditors through each claim audit*"; The examiner takes the position that the applicant's claimed "apparatus adapted to control" is claimed and disclosed in such a way, as to not exclude a human operator in the controlling of the apparatus. Additionally, the examiner takes the position that in the invention of Barrett et al., the human being is merely providing instructions to the auditing workflow system, and that the workflow system actually performs the controlling of the auditing process in the workflow system. This position is supported by Barrett et al. teaching in Column 8, Lines 45-50, that the "*workflow system 216 uses claim information [...] to pass the policy checker recommendation to a human auditor, and to act upon the auditors actions on these recommendations.*") activity stages in a workflow (C 8, L 26-29; "*phases of selection for audit,*

assignment to an auditor and auditing activities") for the purpose of processing the process definitions; and

means for evaluating the process definitions for each process instance (C 8, L 26-29; "*phases of selection for audit, assignment to an auditor and auditing activities*"; The examiner takes the position that rules (process definitions) are evaluated for each phase (process instance), in the invention of Barrett et al., and as a result Barrett et al. anticipates the applicant's claimed invention), the means for evaluating including a functional stage for initiating an activity associated with an activity stage (C 6, L 31-35; "*policy checker audit*"; The examiner takes the position that the "policy checker audit" in the invention of Barrett et al. anticipates the applicant's claimed "functional stage for initiating an activity associated with an activity stage".) and reporting the state of the activity to the second apparatus (C 6, L 31-35; "*the result of the policy checker audit, such as "approve"*"; The examiner takes the position that the term "approve" is an exemplary embodiment of the reporting of the state of the policy checker audit performed in the invention of Barrett et al., and that he anticipates the applicant's claimed reporting.).

Regarding claim 2:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses includes an interference machine (C 11, L 1-15; "*Kohonen network*"; The examiner takes

the position that the Kohonen network acts as a interference machine in the invention of Barrett et al. This "interference" is apparent in the operations of weighting inputs and the delivering (forwarding) of usage pattern statistics (instruction) that are used in later phases (activity stages) to determine which usage patterns have high probability of fraud).

Regarding claim 3:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses includes an interference mechanism, arranged in an interference machine (C 13, L 57-59; "*SOM neural network*") and in contact with a process instance manager, adapted to forward a signal corresponding to the respective instruction for activities of the activity stages to the process instance manager (The examiner takes the position that the SOM neural network acts as an interference machine. This "interference" is apparent in the operation of creating fraud detection rules that can be used to detect patterns indicative of fraud. Additionally, the examiner takes the position that although not explicitly stated, the existence of a process instance manager is inherent in the process of the auditor workflow system tracking the path of an expense entry through the phases of the audit (C 8, L 26-29)).

Regarding claim 4:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Currently Amended) The workflow management system wherein the means for evaluating includes a control stage (The examiner takes the position that the auditor system controls process flow according to the rules is apparent in the statement that modifications made to the system by the rules are saved (C 8, L 19-21; "*modification that are made by these rules are saved*")), supplied with an activity threshold (C 14, L 11-14; "*threshold value*") by an evaluation stage (C 14, L 11-14; "*data pattern analyzer*") for the process status and connected to the functional stage for carrying out the activities (The examiner takes the position that although a functional stage for carrying out activities is not explicitly recited, it is inherent in the invention and is apparent in the process of determining if accumulated expense entries exceed a threshold value in Column 14, Lines 11-14), and wherein the functional stage is adapted to forward a signal corresponding to the respective state of the activities of the activity stages to the process instance manager (The examiner takes the position that the process of forward a signal corresponding to the respective state of the activities to the process instance manager is equivalent to the process of forward an employees serial number and entry keys (signals) that indicate possible fraud (respective states of the auditing activities) to an administration system (process instance manager)).

Regarding claim 5:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to deliver instructions (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the*

auditors through each claim audit"; The examiner takes the position that in guiding the auditors, the auditor workflow system delivers some form of instructions) to activities of the activity stages with an associated continuous variable (The examiner takes the position that the continuous variables claimed by the applicant are equivalent to the flags, taught by Barrett et al., in Column 12, Lines 54-57), the instructions being compared with an activity threshold (C 14, L 11-14; "*threshold value*") for the control stage and providing corresponding "fuzzy" worklists (C 8, L 36-38; "*work lists*"; The examiner takes the position that because the fraud detection process taught by Barrett et al. completes task based on fuzzy rules, it would be inherent for all work list to be fuzzy list. This is apparent because the completion of a task would be dependent on whether certain rules were executed. This is also apparent in the fact that the invention of Barrett et al. continuously modifies rules (C 13, L 51-52; "*rules may need to be modified*")) for each activity of the activity stages, which reports its state to the at least one apparatus in the form of continuous variables.

Regarding claim 6:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses includes causal networks (C 10, L 52-54; "*data pattern analyzer 210 preferably comprises a Self Organizing Map (SOM) Neural Network, and in particular, a Kohonen network*"; The examiner takes the position that the SOM taught by Barrett et al. is a

causal network. This is evident in the fact that based on its analysis of expense patterns (cause) it makes rules (effect) (C 11, L 16-21)).

Regarding claim 7:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to operate on the basis of the laws of fuzzy logic (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the fuzzy rules define the logic used to process the expense entries, and as a result of the logic rules being "fuzzy", the logic is inherently "fuzzy").

Regarding claim 8:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to operate on the basis of the laws of probability-based modeling (C 11, L 8-11; "*the Kohonen network will be manipulated to model the probability distribution*").

Regarding claim 9:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to operate on the basis of the laws of general weighting (C 11, L 6-7; "*neurons closest to the input can then adjust their weights*").

Regarding claim 10:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Currently Amended) A method for implementing a workflow with continuous status management (C 2, L 54-56; "*automated auditing*") through fuzzy process definitions, comprising:

detecting (C 6, L 9-12; "*policy checker 208 comprises a means for testing the selected expense entries in audit queue 308 for compliance with established policies and rules*"; The examiner takes the position that in order to test expense entries, the policy checker has to detect if there is an appropriate rule or policy that dictates whether reimbursement should be paid for the expense being audited) fuzzy process definitions (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the purpose of the rules, in the invention of Barrett et al., is to define the reimbursement process in the automated auditing system);

controlling (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the auditors through each claim audit*"; The examiner takes the position that the applicant's claimed "controlling" is claimed and disclosed in such a way, as to not exclude a human operator in the controlling of the apparatus. Additionally, the examiner takes the position that in the invention of Barrett et al., the human being is merely providing instructions to the auditing workflow system, and that the workflow system actually performs the controlling of the auditing process in the workflow system. This position is supported by Barrett et al. teaching in Column 8, Lines

45-50, that the "*workflow system 216 uses claim information [...] to pass the policy checker recommendation to a human auditor, and to act upon the auditors actions on these recommendations.*") activity stages in a workflow (C 8, L 26-29; "*phases of selection for audit, assignment to an auditor and auditing activities*") for the purpose of processing the process definitions; and

evaluating the process definitions for each process instance (C 8, L 26-29; "*phases of selection for audit, assignment to an auditor and auditing activities*"; The examiner takes the position that rules (process definitions) are evaluated for each phase (process instance), in the invention of Barrett et al., and as a result Barrett et al. anticipates the applicant's claimed invention), the evaluating including at least initiating an activity associated with an activity stage (C 6, L 31-35; "*policy checker audit*"; The examiner takes the position that the "policy checker audit" in the invention of Barrett et al. anticipates the applicant's claimed "functional stage for initiating an activity associated with an activity stage".) and reporting the state of the activity to be used in controlling the activity stages (C 6, L 31-35; "*the result of the policy checker audit, such as "approve"*"; The examiner takes the position that the term "approve" is an exemplary embodiment of the reporting of the state of the policy checker audit performed in the invention of Barrett et al., and that he anticipates the applicant's claimed reporting.).

Regarding claim 11:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed using at least one of fuzzy rules and relations (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the use of fuzzy rules to identify expenses as fraud (relate expenses to fraud), in the invention Barrett et al., anticipates applicant's claimed invention).

Regarding claim 12:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of fuzzy logic (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the fuzzy rules define the logic used to process the expense entries, and as a result of the logic rules being "fuzzy", the logic is inherently "fuzzy").

Regarding claim 13:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of probability-based modeling (C 11, L 8-11; "*the Kohonen network will be manipulated to model the probability distribution*").

Regarding claim 14:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of control systems (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides*

the auditors through each claim audit") with priority weighting (C 14, L 21-23; "*prioritizer 212 which ranks detected rule violations*"; The examiner takes the position that priority weighting claimed by the applicant and the priority ranking taught by Barrett et al. are equivalent and as a result Barrett et al. anticipates applicant's claimed invention.

Regarding claim 15:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses includes an interference mechanism, arranged in an interference machine (C 13, L 57-59; "*SOM neural network*") and in contact with a process instance manager, adapted to forward a signal corresponding to the respective instruction for activities of the activity stages to the process instance manager (The examiner takes the position that the SOM neural network acts as an interference machine. This "interference" is apparent in the operation of creating fraud detection rules that can be used to detect patterns indicative of fraud. Additionally, the examiner takes the position that although not explicitly stated, the existence of a process instance manager is inherent in the process of the auditor workflow system tracking the path of an expense entry through the phases of the audit (C 8, L 26-29)).

Regarding claim 16:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to deliver instructions (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the auditors through each claim audit*"; The examiner takes the position that in guiding the auditors, the auditor workflow system delivers some form of instructions) to activities of the activity stages with an associated continuous variable (The examiner takes the position that the continuous variables claimed by the applicant are equivalent to the flags, taught by Barrett et al., in Column 12, Lines 54-57), the instructions being compared with an activity threshold (C 14, L 11-14; "*threshold value*") for the control stage and providing corresponding "fuzzy" worklists (C 8, L 36-38; "*work lists*"; The examiner takes the position that because the fraud detection process taught by Barrett et al. completes task based on fuzzy rules, it would be inherent for all work list to be fuzzy list. This is apparent because the completion of a task would be dependent on whether certain rules were executed. This is also apparent in the fact that the invention of Barrett et al. continuously modifies rules (C 13, L 51-52; "*rules may need to be modified*")) for each activity of the activity stages, which reports its state to the at least one apparatus in the form of continuous variables.

Regarding claim 17:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to deliver instructions (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the auditors through each claim audit*"; The examiner takes the position that in guiding the

auditors, the auditor workflow system delivers some form of instructions) to activities of the activity stages with an associated continuous variable (The examiner takes the position that the continuous variables claimed by the applicant are equivalent to the flags, taught by Barrett et al., in Column 12, Lines 54-57), the instructions being compared with an activity threshold (C 14, L 11-14; "*threshold value*") for the control stage and providing corresponding "fuzzy" worklists (C 8, L 36-38; "*work lists*"; The examiner takes the position that because the fraud detection process taught by Barrett et al. completes task based on fuzzy rules, it would be inherent for all work list to be fuzzy list. This is apparent because the completion of a task would be dependent on whether certain rules were executed. This is also apparent in the fact that the invention of Barrett et al. continuously modifies rules (C 13, L 51-52; "*rules may need to be modified*")) for each activity of the activity stages, which reports its state to the at least one apparatus in the form of continuous variables.

Regarding claim 18:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The workflow management system wherein at least one of the apparatuses is adapted to deliver instructions (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the auditors through each claim audit*"; The examiner takes the position that in guiding the auditors, the auditor workflow system delivers some form of instructions) to activities of the activity stages with an associated continuous variable (The examiner takes the position that the continuous variables claimed by the applicant are equivalent to the flags,

taught by Barrett et al., in Column 12, Lines 54-57), the instructions being compared with an activity threshold (C 14, L 11-14; "*threshold value*") for the control stage and providing corresponding "fuzzy" worklists (C 8, L 36-38; "*work lists*"; The examiner takes the position that because the fraud detection process taught by Barrett et al. completes task based on fuzzy rules, it would be inherent for all work list to be fuzzy list. This is apparent because the completion of a task would be dependent on whether certain rules were executed. This is also apparent in the fact that the invention of Barrett et al. continuously modifies rules (C 13, L 51-52; "*rules may need to be modified*")) for each activity of the activity stages, which reports its state to the at least one apparatus in the form of continuous variables.

Regarding claim 19:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of fuzzy logic (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the fuzzy rules define the logic used to process the expense entries, and as a result of the logic rules being "fuzzy", the logic is inherently "fuzzy").

Regarding claim 20:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of probability-based modeling (C 11, L 8-11; "*the Kohonen network will be manipulated to model the probability distribution*").

Regarding claim 21:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of fuzzy logic (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the fuzzy rules define the logic used to process the expense entries, and as a result of the logic rules being "fuzzy", the logic is inherently "fuzzy").

Regarding claim 22:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Currently Amended) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of fuzzy logic (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the fuzzy rules define the logic used to process the expense entries, and as a result of the logic rules being "fuzzy", the logic is inherently "fuzzy").

Regarding claim 23:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Original) The method wherein the continuous mapping operations are performed on the basis of the rules of probability-based modeling (C 11, L 8-11; "*the Kohonen network will be manipulated to model the probability distribution*").

Regarding claim 24:

Barrett et al. teaches,

(Currently Amended) A workflow management system (C 8, L 26-29; "*auditor system 256 preferably includes an audit workflow system*") with continuous status management (C 2, L 54-56; "*automated auditing*"), comprising:

means (C 8, L 22-26; "*auditor system*") for detecting (C 6, L 9-12; "*policy checker 208 comprises a means for testing the selected expense entries in audit queue 308 for compliance with established policies and rules*"; The examiner takes the position that in order to test expense entries, the policy checker has to detect if there is an appropriate rule or policy that dictates whether reimbursement should be paid for the expense being audited) fuzzy process definitions (C 12, L 54-57; "*fuzzy rules*"; The examiner takes the position that the purpose of the rules, in the invention of Barrett et al., is to define the reimbursement process in the automated auditing system);

means for controlling (C 8, L 44-45; "*auditor workflow system 216 guides the auditors through each claim audit*") activity stages in a workflow (C 8, L 26-29; "*phases of selection for audit, assignment to an auditor and auditing activities*") for the purpose of processing the process definitions (The examiner takes the

position that the auditor system controls process flow according to the rules is apparent in the statement that modifications made to the system by the rules are saved (C 8, L 19-21; "*modification that are made by these rules are saved*")); and means for evaluating the process definitions for each process instance (C 8, L 26-29; "*phases of selection for audit, assignment to an auditor and auditing activities*"; The examiner takes the position that rules (process definitions) are evaluated for each phase (process instance), in the invention of Barrett et al., and as a result Barrett et al. anticipates the applicant's claimed invention), the means for evaluating including a functional stage for initiating an activity associated with an activity stage (C 6, L 31-35; "*policy checker audit*"; The examiner takes the position that the "policy checker audit" in the invention of Barrett et al. anticipates the applicant's claimed "functional stage for initiating an activity associated with an activity stage".) and reporting the state of the activity to the means for controlling (C 6, L 31-35; "*the result of the policy checker audit, such as "approve"*"; The examiner takes the position that the term "approve" is an exemplary embodiment of the reporting of the state of the policy checker audit performed in the invention of Barrett et al., and that he anticipates the applicant's claimed reporting. The examiner takes the position that the reporting of that the statues of the audit being reported to the workflow system is inherent in the invention of Barrett et al.).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on May 2, 2007 have been fully considered but are found to be non-persuasive. The unpersuasive arguments made by the Applicant are stated below:

In reference to Applicant's argument:

> The workflow management system of claim 1 includes a second [apparatus] "adapted to control activity stages in a workflow for the purpose of processing the process definitions." The auditor workflow system 216 in Barrett, however, performs no such controlling of activity stages. As explicitly set forth in Barrett, the auditor workflow system 216 merely guides a human auditor through each claim audit. That is, namely, the auditor workflow system 216 provides recommendation of actions that a human auditor should take.

Examiner's response:

The examiner has carefully considered the applicant's arguments, but respectfully takes the position that applicant's presently claimed "second apparatus adapted to control activity", is claimed and disclosed in such a way as to not exclude a human as part of said control apparatus. Additionally, the examiner takes the position that the human being is merely providing instructions to the auditing workflow system, and that the workflow system actually performs the controlling of the workflow system. This position is supported by Barrett et al. teaching in Column 8, Lines 45-50, that the "*workflow system 216 uses claim information [...] to pass the policy checker recommendation to a human auditor, and to act upon the auditors actions on these recommendations.*"

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the

mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Adrian L. Kennedy whose telephone number is (571) 270-1505. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon -Fri 8:30am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Knight can be reached on (571) 272-3687. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ALK

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